

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-87 (Cancelled)

Claim 88 (New): A process for making an L-amino acid comprising:

- a) culturing an isolated coryneform bacterium, which expresses an increased amount of the product of the *rpoB* gene (β -subunit of RNA polymerase B) compared to the unmodified starting strain in a medium suitable for the production of said L-amino acid by fermentation, and
- b) recovering said L-amino acid from the culture medium or from the bacterial cells.

Claim 89 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein said amino acid is L-lysine.

Claim 90 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein said amino acid is L-glutamate.

Claim 91 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein the *rpoB* gene is expressed at increased copy number in said bacterium compared to an unmodified starting strain.

Claim 92 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein said *rpoB* gene is integrated into the bacterial chromosome.

Claim 93 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein said *rpoB* gene is present on a plasmid in said bacterium.

Claim 94 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein the expression of the *rpoB* gene is increased by modification of at least one *rpoB* gene promoter, regulatory region, or ribosome binding site in said bacterium.

Claim 95 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein the expression of the *rpoB* gene is increased by the insertion of an expression cassette upstream of the *rpoB* gene in said bacterium.

Claim 96 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein the expression level of the *rpoB* gene product is enhanced by prolonging the life of m-RNA encoding the *rpoB* gene product.

Claim 97 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein the enzyme activity of the *rpoB* gene product is enhanced by preventing its degradation.

Claim 98 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein said bacterium is at least one selected from the group consisting of *Corynebacterium glutamicum*, *Corynebacterium acetoglutamicum*, *Corynebacterium acetoacidophilum*, *Corynebacterium melassecola*, *Corynebacterium thermoaminogenes*, *Brevibacterium flavum*, *Brevibacterium lactofermentum*, and *Brevibacterium divaricatum*.

Claim 99 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein said bacterium is *Corynebacterium glutamicum*.

Claim 100 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein said bacterium further comprises at least one gene whose expression is enhanced (compared to an unmodified starting strain) selected from the group consisting of:

the *dapA* gene which codes for dihydrodipicolinate synthase,
the *gap* gene which codes for glyceraldehydes 3-phosphate dehydrogenase,
the *tpi* gene which codes for triose phosphate isomerase,
the *pgk* gene which codes for 3-phosphoglycerate kinase,
the *zwf* gene which codes for the *zwf* gene product,
the *pyc* gene which codes for pyruvate carboxylase,
the *mgo* gene which codes for malate quinine oxidoreductase,
the *lysC* gene which codes for feed-back resistant aspartate kinase,
the *lysE* gene which codes for lysine export,
the *zwa1* gene which codes for Zwa protein, and
the *rpsL* gene which codes for ribosomal protein S12.

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Preliminary Amendment

Claim 101 (New): The process of Claim 88, wherein said bacterium further comprises at least one gene whose expression is attenuated (compared to an unmodified starting strain) selected from the group consisting of:

the *pck* gene which codes for phosphoenol pyruvate carboxykinase,
the *pgi* gene which codes for glucose 6-phosphate isomerase,
the *poxB* gene which codes for pyruvate oxidase, and
the *zwa2* gene which codes for the Zwa2 protein.

Claim 102 (New): The process of Claim 88, which is a batch process.

Claim 103 (New): The process of Claim 88, which is a fed batch or repeated fed batch process.

Claim 104 (New): The process of Claim 88, which is a continuous process.